GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5506
ANSWERED ON:02.05.2000
SOIL TESTING FACILITIES
SHIVAJI VITHALRAO KAMBLE

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated an action plan for promoting, expanding and upgrading farmers training and soil testing facilities in dry farming areas of Maharashtra through Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers Ltd. or other fertilizer corporations;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the review of work so far carried out in Maharashtra; and

(c) the details of projects under consideration to expand and upgrade these services in Maharashtra in general and Marathwada region in particular?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS

(SHRI RAMESH BAIS)

(a) to (c): The Government is implementing a Centrally sponsored scheme entitled Balanced& Integrated Use of Fertilizers under which strengthening of soil testing service in the country is an important component. The scheme provides for giving financial support for establishment of new soil testing laboratories / strengthening of the existing ones by way of providing funds for supply of equipment. Under this scheme, in case of Maharashtra, a total of 28 soil testing laboratories have been strengthened for which an amount of Rs. 121.41 lakhs has been released to the State. Government is also encouraging the fertilizer sector undertakings / cooperatives for undertaking farmers training and soil testing facilities in the country. Among the various fertilizer corporations / cooperatives under the administrative control of Govt. of India, RCF islocated in Maharashtra, whereas PPL, MFL, NFL, IFFCO an KRIBHCO have some presence irthe State. The performance of these companies / cooperatives in these areas are reviewed by the Government, quarterly. The details of such activities conducted / proposed to be conducted by the PSUs/Cooperatives in the state of Maharashtra isncluding its Marathwada region are given in the attached Annexure.

Annexure

Annexure referred to in reply to Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 5506 to be answered on 2.5.2000.

Name of the PSUs/Cooperatives	Details of farmers training programmes and soil testing activities conducted / proposed to be conducted.
Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers Ltd. (RCF)	RCF has established three static soil testing laboratories and four mobile soil testing vans in Maharashtra State. The static soil testing laboratories are located at Trombay, Kolhapur and Nagpur and the mobile testing laboratories operate from Trombay, Kolhapur, Nagpur and Ahmednagar. RCF is organising farmers training and soil testing programmes in all the districts of Maharashtra including Marathwada region. The company has also established two farmers training centres at Nagpur and Thal (Alibaug) under the technical guidance and cooperation of Agriculture Universities where it organises four to six days farmers training programmes. RCF conducts 15 to 20 farmers training programmes every year at each centre.
Paradeep Phosphates Ltd. (PPL)	PPL is contemplating to support Utthan Scheme in the Konkan region of Maharashtra for collection of soil samples and conducting farmers training programmes. Besides, PPL has been conducting crop demonstration, crop seminars and farmers meeting to educate them about the adoption of scientific agriculture techniques and balanced dose of fertilizers.

Madras Fertilizers Ltd MFL has conducted four farmers contact programmes in western

(MFL) Maharashtra during 1999-2000 to educate the farmers about soil testing, efficient use of fertilizers in 104 villages covering 5800 farmers.One of these was a farmers contact programme in Marathwada region through trained Agricultural Assistants in which around 4000 farmers were educated in 50 villages. MFL has also provided free soil testing services to the farmers of Marathwada region.

National Fertilizers NFL has initiated its marketing network in Maharashtra only in 1999-
Ltd. (NFL) 2000. The company proposes to undertake over 70 activities of fertilizer promotion such as field / block demonstrations, field days, farmers meeting, tree plantation campaign, group seminars, farmers study visit to plant / research centres, kisan melas / exhibitions etc. during the year 2000-01 in the state of Maharashtra.

Indian Farmers To promote farmers` training and soil testing facilities in Marathwada
FertiliserCooperative region, IFFCO has established one area office at Aurangabad covering
Ltd. (IFFCO) the districts of Jalna, Beed, Latur, Prabhani, Nanded and Osmanabad. Further, IFFCO has undertaken a number of field programmes to provide extension education support to farmers. These programmes include farmers` meetings, field testing, sales point training, district cooperative conferences, crop seminars, soil testing campaign, plant protection, tree plantation, plant demonstration, block demonstrations, minikit distribution, village adoption, project on micro irrigation and soil reclamation.

Krishak Bharati KRIBHCO is operating a fleet of 6 Mobile Soil Testing (MST) vans
Cooperative Ltd. throughout its marketing territory. A MST van at Aurangabad is

(KRIBHCO) exclusively serving the farmers in the state of Maharashtra including remote, inaccessible and dry land areas of Marathwada. The services provided by MST vans are further strengthened by distribution of free technical literature, putting up mini exhibition on the soil testing site and organising farmers` meet for educating the benefits of soil testing and efficient utilisation of fertilizers for increasing crop production under different agro-climatic situation.